



What Kind of Leader Are You?

Knowing your leadership personality type – and that of others – can help you connect.

By Libby Gill

When I left the entertainment industry to make coaching – my true passion – a full-time career, I was fascinated to see how similar the challenges facing my coaching clients were to those I'd dealt with in my studio days.

Even though I was now working with people in different career fields, the themes were universal. Entrepreneurs and executives wanted to learn to be better leaders, motivate employees and meet corporate objectives – all while maintaining a realistic work-life balance.

While the business agendas were similar, the people themselves seemed quite different in terms of attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. Eventually, however, just as I'd observed common business concerns among diverse clients, I saw some similar personality types emerge.

At the risk of oversimplifying the complexities of human nature, there seems to be some basic categories into which most people fit. Take a look and see if you can identify yourself, or the key people in your life, in the list below:

DIRECTOR: A natural leader, the Director likes to take charge of projects and people. Directors have a sense of vision and are comfortable making decisions, even in the absence of all the data and information they'd like. Focused and driven, Directors can be demanding, even dictatorial. But no matter how critical a Director can be when it comes to other people, those standards are nothing compared to the Director's expectations for him or herself.

IMPLEMENTER: Like the name implies, an Implementer is most at home working in service of others. Hard working, dependable and loyal, the Implementer is an excellent candidate to implement another's vision. Implementers can work independently but are also very collaborative and enjoy working in groups. Just don't ask them to take the lead or make the final decisions. When the right Director and Implementer team up, they can make

an unbeatable combination.

THRILL-SEEKER: Thrill-seekers are easy to spot. They're at the center of the action, soaking up the attention. They're usually charismatic, often creative and occasionally downright annoying. While Thrill-seekers can definitely get the party started, they're not particularly completion-driven and are apt to move on to the next project when their enthusiasm wanes, regardless of whether or not the job is done.

ANALYST: The Analyst thrives on information – the more the better. Although Analysts are skilled at synthesizing data, they can be slow to make decisions, always looking for the next piece of the puzzle before they make up their minds. The Analyst's thoughtful approach can be a great asset to the achievement- driven Director and can even keep the Thrill-seeker in check, as long as his or her tortoise-like speed doesn't rile the hare.

Ask yourself the following questions to get some insight into your own personality type and that of your colleagues, customers or clients.

Which description do you most closely resemble as your dominant personality type? What is your secondary type? Rank your third and fourth most dominant types as well.

Can you recognize the personality types of the key people in your personal and professional life, including your boss, employees, spouse and kids?
Can you see why you click with some people and clash with others?

Now, give some thought to how you communicate with each of these different types and consider if adjusting your style might increase the effectiveness of your communication.

I'm predominantly a Director. In fact, I'm ready to sign off now and go start another project, though the Supporter wants to stick around to see what else might be useful to you. Meantime, the Thrill-seeker is just getting a kick out of the fact that I'm writing this on a laptop while riding a bus to a friend's home. The Analyst just wants to know where I can get a Wi-Fi connection and what's for dinner.

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